



Testimony of Carol Scully -Amended
Director of Advocacy, The Arc of Connecticut, Inc.
LCO No. 3837 S.B. 991 An Act Concerning Medicaid Reimbursement For
Community Health Workers

March 3, 2023

Members of the Human Services Committee: Co-Chair Representative Gilchrest, Co-Chair Senator Lessor, Vice Chair Senator Herron Gaston, Vice Chair Representative Lucy Dathan, Ranking Member Senator Lisa Seminara, Ranking Member Representative Jay Case, Senator Mahar, Representative Butler, Representative Cook, Representative Comey, Representative Exum, Representative Fortier, Representative Hughes, Representative Johnson, Representative Keitt, Representative Leeper, Representative Santiago, Representative Buckbee, Representative Ferraro, Representative Mastrofrancesco, Representative Pizzuto, Representative Polleta:

The Arc Connecticut is the oldest and the largest community-based organization advocating for and with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families. We work tirelessly to uphold our vision that every individual and family living with I/DD has access to the information, advocacy, and skills they need to support their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes.

We are a chapter of The Arc of The United States, which has 675 chapters in 49 states and over 5,000 service locations. Nationwide, we have approximately 7,000 board members, 124,000 staff, 46,000 volunteers and collectively we serve more than 1 million people with I/DD and their family members.

In Connecticut, our 14 Arc local chapters deliver over \$100 million in jobs, supports and services to thousands of people in 162 communities. Nonprofit providers including the Arcs are the largest provider of supports and services for people with I/DD and their families in the state, providing about 96% of the services.

The Arc of Connecticut supports S.B. 991, a bill that proposes reimbursement under state Medicaid regulations for certified community health workers. The Arc CT believes that providers of community health care should be reimbursed to the extent possible for the cost of care under Medicaid. This support does, however, come with a caveat, that community health care workers whenever possible provide care under the DSS/DDS Medicaid waivers that provide services for persons with intellectual developmental/developmental disabilities and persons with Autism.

The bill as drafted is fine, no additional changes are necessary. The Arc of Connecticut does want to comment and oppose a value-based payment approach in response to DSS Commissioner – designee Reeves endorsement of a “more focused integration of CHW’s into Medicaid, primarily through the utilization of value—based models that are presently undergoing evaluation by the Department.”

The Arc of Connecticut refers legislators to a *July 14, 2022* article in the *New England Journal of Medicine* “REACHing” for Equity – the article states “most CMS value-based payment methods have failed to meaningfully reduce healthcare expenditures or improve quality of care.” Value-based payment initiatives have failed to advance health equity in large part because equity wasn’t prioritized during their design and implementation. In failing to explicitly consider equity, value-based payment programs

implicitly prioritize well resourced clinicians and health systems”, additionally, “the desire to avoid losses may also promote “gaming” that disproportionally harms low-income and historically marginalized populations.

The Arc of Connecticut urges the legislature to pass S.B. 991 increasing access to certified community healthcare workers for persons with disabilities with the original bill language.

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